



The Board of Park and Recreation Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, met at the Administrative Office Building, located at 5841 Brookshire Blvd., Charlotte, NC 28216 at 6 p.m. on May 9, 2017.

May 9, 2017

ATTENDANCE

PRC Present:

Elaine Powell, Chair
 Kendel Bryant, Vice Chair
 Tristan McMannis, Executive Secretary
 Sterling Martin
 Ed Barnhart
 Heidi Pruess
 Doug Burnett
 Brian Cox
 Mary Johnson
 Rick Winiker
 Marc Seelinger
 Jim Garges, Director of Park and Recreation

PRC Absent:

Peter Engels
 Aubin Guinness

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Elaine Powell, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance.

Welcome and Introductions:

Park and Recreation Commissioners: Each Commissioner introduced themselves and the park region they represent, including the two newly appointed Park and Recreation Commissioners; **Marc Seelinger** – South 3 and **Rick Winiker** – Central 3.

Leadership Academy Members: Deputy Director, Michael Kirschman, introduced members of the Department's Leadership Academy and shared information on the program. The Leadership Academy Program began during the recession as a way to provide training for future leaders of the Department. The classes are held every other year and consist of specified classes, a mentor/mentee relationship and a group project. The members attend leadership luncheons which includes notable speakers from business, academics, politics and other recreation departments. Participants must apply and have at least 2 years' service, have successful reviews and no disciplinary action.

Golf Advisory Council Members: Members present from the Golf Advisory Council were introduced.

Proclamations, Awards and Recognitions: None

Public Appearance: None

Staff and Public Presentations

Panther's Play 60 Playground at Reedy Creek: Riley Fields, Director of Community Relations for the Panthers, made a presentation on the Play 60 Playgrounds and the plan to install a Play 60 Playground at Reedy Creek Park. Mr. Fields shared background information on the first two Play 60 Playgrounds installed at Freedom Park and Hornet's Nest Park and the plans to install a 3rd Play 60 Playground at Reedy Creek Park. This will be a \$265,000 – \$275,000 joint funding partnership with the Panthers, Lowes and Mecklenburg County. Construction is set to begin in August and be completed in September. This presentation can be viewed here: [Reedy Creek Park Play 60 Challenge Course](#)

Corporate Logos/Sponsorship: Director Garges addressed concerns expressed regarding the Lowe's Logo included in the playground. The Lowe's logo is in line with other corporate logos throughout the County and is going to be appropriately displayed. The County policy regarding sponsorship only excludes firearm and alcohol sponsorships.

Therapeutic Elements: Director Garges also addressed questions regarding therapeutic elements. He said that Karla Gray, Therapeutic Manager, has been consulted regarding the TR elements. The area will include two sets of TR swings.

Motion was made by Commissioner Cox to endorse the installation of the Play 60 Challenge Course at Reedy Creek Park, which was seconded by Commissioner Barnhart and approved unanimously.

Naming Application – Renaissance Golf Course to the Harry L. Jones, Sr. Golf Course.

Director Garges presented a naming application being submitted by Commissioner Vilma Leake to name the golf course at Renaissance Park the Harry L. Jones, Sr. Golf Course. Mr. Jones, who lost his battle with Pancreatic cancer in February of 2017, served as the Mecklenburg County Manager from 2000 to 2013. The naming application can be viewed here: [Naming Application - Harry L. Jones, Sr.](#)

Motion was made by Commissioner Cox to endorse the naming of the golf course at Renaissance Park the "Harry L. Jones, Sr. Golf Course", which was seconded by Commissioner Barnhart and approved unanimously.

In addition, the Chair of the Golf Advisory Council, Commissioner Cox, and Golf Advisory Council member, Raymond Cante, both indicated that the Golf Advisory Council would be in full support of the naming.

2016 Community Survey Results: Deputy Director, Michael Kirschman, made a presentation on the 2016 Park and Recreation Community Survey results. The presentation discussed both the significant progress the Department has made in new facilities and land acquisition since 2007

and the major findings from the survey results (conducted by the ETC Institute). This presentation can be viewed here: [2016 Community Survey Results](#)

Director Garges encouraged the PRC to share the information from the survey results with their BOCC to remind them of the citizen driven needs revealed in the survey.

Discussion regarding how to bring awareness of the Department's facilities and programs to the public revealed the Departments need for funding for marketing. The Department does the best job possible using social media, but funding for marketing would greatly improve the Departments ability to get the word out about Park and Recreation programs.

It was suggested that making a presentation on the community survey results to the Northern and Southern towns would help increase awareness and advocacy.

Park and Recreation Commission Priorities

Adequate Funding: The budget timeline was discussed and it was decided that the PRC would meet with Jim on May 31 or June 1 to prepare for advocating at the Budget Public Hearing on June 5. Commissioner Barnhart would like to sign up to speak separately. Commissioners McMannis, Winiker and Pruess agreed to speak as well.

Land Preservation: Director Garges shared that the Department encouraged the County Manger and BOCC to not rank land against other County projects. Ultimately, the County began taking a percentage off the top of the Capital Improvement budget each year for land acquisition, approximately \$6.5 million per year. The Department has identified land parcels through the green printing process and the Department continues to work through this list.

Advisory Council Appointments/Reappointments:

Aquatics: **Motion was made** by Commissioner Cox to appoint **Mike Peffer** to an unexpired term on the Aquatics Advisory Council, expiring 6/2019, which was seconded by Commission Barnhart and approved unanimously.

Director's Report:

Eastway Regional Recreation Center Update: Lee Jones, Division Director of Capital Planning, gave an update on the Eastway Regional Recreation Center. An info-graphic card was shared outlining the planning, design and construction process; the community engagement plan and steering committee meetings and plans for community celebrations. In addition, a website has been created (www.eastwayrec.com) to keep the community informed and provide for input.

The next community celebration is planned for June 3. Director Garges, shared the challenge of getting the Hispanic community actively engaged in the planning. The Department plans to go out into their communities to meet them and share information about the recreation center and encourage them to participate in the community celebrations and other planning opportunities.

With funding, hopefully in July, the Northern Regional Recreation Center will begin. Director Garges has encouraged the Cornelius Park and Recreation Commission to participate in the planning process for the Eastway Regional Recreation Center which will help prepare them for the process they will be going through on the Northern Regional Recreation Center.

Draft CIP Cash Flow FY19 – FY23: Director Garges shared the CIP Cash Flow presentation made to the BOCC by acting Finance Director, Mark Foster. The report is a draft and subject to change. Director Garges focused attention on the CIP Cash Flow for Park and Recreation and covered the following information and discussion:

- The report listed the projects that have been approved for the Department and the cash flow for each during FY19 – FY23 and included \$31 million for greenways and two \$40-million-dollar regional recreation centers; Eastway and Northern. FY19-FY23 also includes special projects: Discovery Place, Memorial Stadium and Land Acquisition.
- The report also listed FY18 projects; Pearle Street Park, the start of Eastway Regional Recreation Center and David B. Waymer Recreation Center Renovations.
- \$3 million dollars in projects from the 2008 bond referendum did not make the FY19-23 CIP, including Druid Hills and Ezell Farms. If these projects are not funded in the FY19-23 CIP, it will be after 2023.
- Concern was expressed that Park and Recreation CIP funding fell far below that of other County Departments.
- The PRC asked to schedule a time with staff to prepare for the PRC presentation at the June 5 Budget Public Hearing.
- The Department will also make a CIP presentation to the Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee (CCBAC). This committee will make capital project recommendations to the BOCC.
- Important that the PRC reach out to their BOCC to advocate and share information from the Community Survey.

Mark Foster's presentation can be viewed here: [Capital Improvement Program Update – May 2, 2017](#)

PRC Chair Report:

Livable Meck – Age Friendly Mindfulness: Chair Powell participated in the Livable Meck program on April 20 and agreed to share with the PRC the importance of considering the age friendliness of our projects.

Greenway Walkers and Cyclist: Regular walkers on Little Sugar Creek Greenway contacted Chair Powell to express concern of rude cyclist on the greenway. This has been an ongoing issue and required continuous education. The walkers were advised to bring their concern to the Greenway Advisory Council.

PRC Agenda: All were encouraged to submit agenda items and asked to submit at least one week prior to the PRC meeting. Timing for agenda items should be discussed prior to the PRC meeting to ensure the times are reasonable.

Health Transition: Chair Powell expressed the importance of having programming that supports and gives people a comfortable and judgement free place to exercise while they are making the transition to better health. The Department, during discussions on programming the Eastway Regional Recreation Center, is considering incorporating space where curtains could be used for exercise privacy.

Consent Items

Motion was made by Commissioner Pruess to approve all consent items, including the PRC minutes of April 11, 2017 which was seconded by Commissioner Bryant and approved unanimously.

Park Commissioners Reports:

Commissioner Martin: Walked Abersham and Fisher Farm Greenway. Progress has slowed due to weather.

Commissioner Seelinger: Walked the McAlpine Greenway

Commissioner Cox: There will be a Strategic Planning and Long Range Finance committee meeting on May 17. The River District will be a topic of discussion.

Commissioner Bryant: Reminded the PRC of the upcoming Mental Health Walk at Park Road Park on May 20, 2017.

Commissioner McMannis: Helped with the Sr. Games at Nevin Park.

Commissioner Barnhart: LSC GW Ribbon Cutting at Cordelia Park on May 3. Also kicked off the Greenways for Mecklenburg Foundation on May 3. Commissioner Barnhart shared that he will be a part of this foundation that will work in partnership with the Department and other organization to advocate for greenways.

Commissioner Pruess: Participated in the Archery portion of the Sr. Games. Participated with the Athletics Advisory Council at the opening of the field at the Sportsplex in Matthews. Wall of Fame presentations will be made on May 18 at Revolution.

Commissioner Winiker: After Open Streets 704, his neighborhood is considering having a neighborhood "Open Streets".

Commissioner Burnette: Reminded the Board of upcoming Greenway openings including Toby Creek and Caldwell Station in Cornelius.

Adjournment The meeting adjourned at 9 p.m.